CHAPTER 221

As soon as Jinwoo said “Arise”, he heard the system as if it were already waiting for him.

[Arise]
[The removal code for the ‘Player’ development system has been entered]
[The system will now be deleted]

With true strength, Jinwoo separated himself from a system that was no longer needed. Jinwoo felt like someone who suddenly left the caretaker who raised him.

“Why does the system have a female voice?”
[...that’s the system creator’s voice]

『Shadow Monarch』, who was fading away, explained.

[Their race is able to speak in a male or female voice.]
“....”

Every time Jinwoo heard the clear and humble voice of the system, he always thought of who the voice was. He never thought it belonged to an angel.

Jinwoo, who looked disappointed, looked at the 『Shadow Monarch』, and then laughed.
‘I feel sick because of this, even his voice is more pleasing to me.’
Worthy of someone who breaks a promise with a creator who considers trust more than anything.
A slightly sad light appeared in the eyes of the 『Shadow Monarch』.
Meanwhile, the process of the system removal finished.

[All system restrictions to the ‘Player’ have been removed.]
[Because the restrictions have been removed, all Shadow Soldiers of the 『Monarch』 will regain their original abilities]

[Greed’s strength recovered]

[『Ber』’s strength increases]

[Asbon, the previous 『Shadow Monarch』, returns to the void.]

Jinwoo, who listened to the message in silence, raised his head.

And the 『Shadow Monarch』 looked at himself with a bittersweet smile.

Through memories of his past in the world of death, Jinwoo, who fully understood his suffering, bid him a sincere farewell.

“Goodbye, King.”

Rest calmly where you wish.

Finally, the system gives Jinwoo a message.

[Are you sure you want to delete the system?]

The options ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ flashed in the air.

Jinwoo’s gaze shifted to the 『Shadow Monarch』 again, who didn’t lose his smile to the end.

‘This is the last thing we’ll remember each other by.’

Jinwoo laughed.

He answered the system one last time.

“Yes.”
The 「Ice Monarch」 and 「Beast Monarch」 were pushed backwards simultaneously by a pressure accompanied by strong wind and light.

「Shadow Monarch」’s forehead wrinkled, and immediately after his eyes widened.

The robe surrounding the man’s body burned with a light of gold.
A light that was a symbol of the 「Rulers」

‘That man must have regained his strength. Why did the 「Rulers」 help one of the strongest 「Monarchs」, the 「Shadow Monarch」?’

The 「Ice Monarch」 then said.

[The worst disaster comes from that human body you want to protect!]
[Are you going to give this place to a being such as that?]

The man in the golden robe did not answer. Instead, he only raised his two daggers as high as his chin in a reverse handle. Unwilling to step aside.

The 「Ice Monarch」, aware of the enemy’s intentions, stiffened.

The opponent is currently trying to harmonize his body with the Power of the 「Rulers」. The human body cannot handle the power of a god.

If they don’t fully control the human body, it will be destroyed.

But... is he willing to die to help raise the 「Shadow Monarch」?
What is this person thinking...

『Ice Monarch』 looked at 『Beast Monarch』.

Their eyes gave an unusual expression.

They were running out of time.

The 『Beast Monarch』 nodded.

Then –

The two 『Monarchs』, who approached the hooded man in a split second, quickly attacked.

Claws and Ice Blades tried to corner the hooded man, but he dodged them with skilled movements.

Despite being bombarded by attacks, the hooded man still managed to fight back.

It was the ability of a soldier who’s gone through countless battles.

A difficult opponent.

The Ice and Beast monarch knew this man has great strength. Strength that makes death itself ran away from.

Bang!

The hooded man, who held the two 『Monarch』’s weapons with strong magic power, pushed them back again with their strength.

The two 『Monarchs』, who felt it would be difficult to end this, stood still at a distance.

The man did not chase them, and only protected Jinwoo, who was a container for the 『Shadow Monarch』.

[Who are you?]

The 『Ice Monarch』 asked, but the hooded man remained silent.

Then-
『Beast Monarch』 returned to his human form.

[I’ll stop.]

The sharp fangs that protruded from his mouth disappeared, and his long and sharp nails became ordinary human hands.

The 『Ice Monarch』 saw and called to him.

[Are you crazy? You came here to run in the end?]

The 『Beast Monarch』 raised his head and answered.

[Don’t you feel it?]

Because of his great instincts, he felt the flow of the air gradually begin to change and vibrate.

[The 『Shadow Monarch』 has risen.]

『Beast Monarch』 ‘s eyes that were pointed at the sky moved back to the 『Ice Monarch』.

[I’m leaving.]

[You promised to help defeat the 『Shadow Monarch』!]

Blood vessels bulged in the 『Ice Monarch』 ‘s throat.

But the 『Beast Monarch』 answered calmly.

[My promise only applies to when he’s still human. But anytime now, he’ll be resurrected. I have no obligation to keep my promise to you.]
[Are you running to save your tail?!

The『Beast Monarch』produced tremendous pressure.

[You don’t understand because you haven’t seen the『Shadow Monarch』’s true power!].

The『Beast Monarch』had already witnessed the true power of the『Shadow Monarch』, who survived the attacks of both the『Demon Monarch』and the『Rulers』.

[Is your pride that important that you’re going to sacrifice your life to such a monster?]
[It’s better to hide behind a dragon than to face that.]
[If I don’t do that, I doubt I could live.]

[Back then, it was right of me to leave the battlefield by abandoning『Demon Monarch』.]
[And if I couldn’t destroy the human container, the risk is too high for me and I would meet the original『Shadow Monarch』.]

The『Beast Monarch』was the king of animals, with an abundant source of strength and vitality.
The power of death, which consumes vitality, is what he fears the most.

[There’s still time to leave before it’s too late.]

When the『Beast Monarch』sensed his fear of death drawing near, he opened a『Gate』and before leaving, he said to the『Ice Monarch』.

[Good luck.]

The『Ice Monarch』became increasingly angry and finally clicked his tongue when he saw the『Gate』begin to close.

[Stupid beast.]

[How can you call yourself the strongest and voracious hunter in the world if you’re running away from a weakened prey?]¹

¹ EDN: Hunter as in its literary meaning, not the dungeon-diving kind.
But the『Ice Monarch』still had his goal.

No matter what, he wanted to kill the『Shadow Monarch』.

The game has reached its end.

There is no change in plans.

He thought he didn’t need to borrow the coward’s help anymore at this point.

『Ice Monarch』strengthens his body.

Since it’s not a physical body, he must release enormous stamina to maintain the body.

Now is the time to finish the『Shadow Monarch』with all his strength.

[Feel the fear of cold!]

『Ice Monarch』made a terrifying ice storm that covered the entire surrounding area. The huge snowstorm started to move, rumbling as it walked towards the hooded man.

[This is my true strength!]

Tens of thousands of ice blades and crystals formed from the atmosphere began to appear like snowfall.

It was an attack that needed all his strength. The cars on the road were swept away like toys, the buildings were falling apart.

However, the hooded man did not move a step. He remained and took care of the man behind him with all his might.

Injuries continuously increased on the body of the hooded man as he was buffeted by the blizzard filled with endless blades of ice.

[Come forth my soldiers!]

Ice dolls formed from mana appeared one by one, quickly growing to several thousands.

[Attack!]
The ice dolls ran to attack the hooded man together.
The man desperately defended against the ice dolls surrounding him.

Then –

*Slash -!*

The "Ice Monarch"’s shuddered.

[...]

The blizzard blew in all directions.
The hooded man puts strength into his legs and jumped.
As the man moved closer, the "Ice Monarch" was shocked.
He scattered into the snow and dodged.

*[Go!]*

Ice dolls scattered like worms writing on the ground.
The "Ice Monarch" then appeared before the man and opened his mouth.
From his opened mouth, a ferocious roar that froze the air was heard.
The jaw of the man, who was exposed from under his robe, was covered in ice.
This is dangerous.
The man also knew this.
But if he avoids it, the attack will hit Jinwoo who’s unconscious.
The man showed no signs of dodging even in the face of the terrible attack from the "Ice Monarch".
Seeing this, the『Ice Monarch』’s face distorted.

He thought,

‘*How dare humans borrow the power of higher beings like us, and dare to do impolite things in front of this extraordinary power?’*

From his angry mouth exploded a terrible cold.

_Huooa-!

The hooded man crossed his arms to block the cold.

The arm that held back the attack immediately froze, and the attack mercilessly hit the hooded man.

_Creak -! Creak-! Creak-! Creak-!

Every time the『Ice Monarch』roared angrily, the robed man’s body shook.

But he did not back down.

Blood spilled around his legs as he continued to receive the attack.

_[How dare you human!]

The『Ice Monarch』then raised his right arm upwards. The cold gathered around his arm and into a large collection of ice.

‘*Let’s see if you can block this.*’

『Ice Monarch』and the ice doll behind him made a large block of ice.

_Creak-!

The hooded man stared at the shadow of the ice block in front of him and raised his frozen arm onto his head.

‘*Even if my body breaks, I will protect him.*’
The golden light of his body glowed brilliantly, carrying all the strength of the "Ruler" in his body.

And finally.

*Whoosh -!*

Nothing happened.

“What happened...?”

When the hooded man opened his eyes, he saw someone standing in front of him.

“...!”

Wearing black armor, a long red mane flowing down the back of his helmet.

The "Shadow Monarch"’s loyal knight, "Igris".

"Igris" pushed back the block of ice that he blocked.

The "Ice Monarch" couldn’t believe his eyes.

[ "Igris" ?]

It’s not like the Shadow Soldier Commander!

The "Ice Monarch”’s gaze immediately moved behind the hooded man. And as he expected, the figure of the human lying there had disappeared.

The "Ice Monarch" finally understood what the "Beast Monarch" had been talking about.

The air vibrated violently, as if resonating with the emergence of powerful beings.

Then, "Igris" gracefully knelt and lowered his head.

*Kiee Ee-!"
Ber, who came out like Igris, also kneeled in the same direction. Roaring as if to reveal the return of the King.

Jinwoo then walks between the two.

Around the ruins, Jinwoo asked Ice Monarch.

“Did the other one run away?”

[...]

The Ice Monarch realized his stupidity too late.

The Ice Monarch, the King of the Cold, was now shivering before the King of Death.

Jinwoo then said.

“I won’t allow it.”

The Ice Monarch who couldn’t understand his words, asked.

[What?]

“I won’t allow it.”

[What do you mean?]

Without listening to the words of the Ice Monarch, Jinwoo glanced at the surrounding area and quickly found a wave of Beast Monarch’s unique magic and quickly expanded his magic power.

The scope of his magic power quickly expanded beyond Korea and throughout the world.

He strongly believed that the Beast Monarch would not escape to dimensional gaps and would surely be somewhere in this world.

And that belief held true.

Jinwoo, who discovered the hidden Beast Monarch’s spirit, opened his eyes and smiled.

“Let’s meet.”